

## CLAIMS

### WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A data processing system form of managing transactions in a research consortium comprising:

a membership register for identifying consortium members;

a research database to store entries by members and time-stamp means for identifying submission of research;

a means for resolving research substance into a set of characteristics;

a database means for storing a set of criteria;

said criteria being measured by presence or absence of a characteristic;

comparison means to determine if characteristics of a research solution meet a pre-defined set of criteria;

an interface for communication with a partner having an agreement with said consortium to compensate said consortium for use of said research solution;

a report register for receiving reports from said partner to receive reports defining compensatable uses of the research solution; and

a rule-based account generator for processing said report data, said rule-based account generator incorporating a rule defining share of each participant of compensation due to said consortium based on said report data, said rule-based account generator generating a result comprising an amount of compensation due to a participant in accordance with the rule.

2. A system according to claim 1 wherein said interface comprises means to receive transmissions indicative of electronic funds transfers to said consortium from said partner; and

wherein said rule-based generator comprises means for generating instructions to instruct a transfer to a participant in accordance with said result.

3. The system according to claim 1, further comprising a side deal register to store side deal arrangements between a participant and at least one other participant, said side deal register being coupled to said rule-based register to modify said rule in accordance with a side deal.
4. The system according to claim 1, comprising a lead institution terminal for operation by a lead institution, said CPU providing a privilege to said lead institution to characterize research submissions according to characteristics.
5. The system according to claim 1, further comprising a telecommunications routine for providing an on-line meeting of said participants.
6. The system according to claim 5, further comprising a privilege register for providing access to selected entries in said research database to selected populations.
7. The system according to claim 6, wherein selected populations comprise consortium members, the public, consortium negotiating partners and consortium partners.
8. The system according to claim 1, wherein said rule comprises  $R_w = (100\% - (N-1\%)) \times I$  where  $R_w$  is a winner's share,  $N$  is the total number of participants in the consortium, and  $I$  is the amount of income accruing from the research solution and wherein  $R_p = I/(N-1)$ , where  $R_p$  is a participant's share.
9. The system of claim 1, further comprising a membership register wherein members may vote to admit other members and wherein members may vote to remove members.

10. A system according to claim 9, wherein said membership register registers a result corresponding to an invitation for potential members receiving a vote of at least  $N-1$  where  $N$  is the number of current members.

11. A system according to claim 9, wherein said membership register will register a result equivalent expulsion of a member in response to a vote of not less than  $N-1$  where  $N$  is the total number of current members.

12. A method for creating and exploiting a research solution comprising: establishing a consortium consisting of a set of members, providing a network for communication among all members, authorizing access by members of the consortium to the network and protecting the network from non-members, communicating by at least a member to provide data to said network, exchanging data between at least one member and another member; tracking when and by whom each provision of data is contributed, identifying a solution in data in said network; earning income based on said solution; and allocating said income among said members in accordance with a predetermined rule.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising providing a membership rule for adding new members and eliminating members and selectively adding or elimination members in accordance with the membership rule.

14. The method of claim 12 wherein allocating comprises calculating an amount due to a member utilizing the predetermined rule.

15. The method of claim 12 wherein said consortium is a medical research consortium and wherein said data inputs are proprietary to the consortium.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein one member is characterized as a winner based upon correspondence of input of the member with a solution

and wherein the winner is allocated a winner's share in accordance with the rule.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein members other than the winner are characterized as participants and wherein each participant is allocated a participant's share in accordance with the rule.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said rule comprises  $R = (100\% - (N - 1\%)) \times I$  where  $R_w$  is a winner's share,  $N$  is the total number of members in the consortium, and  $I$  is the amount of income accruing from the research solution and wherein  $R_p = I/(N-1)$ , where  $R_p$  is a participant's share.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein providing a network comprises providing a virtual private network.

20. The method of claim 19 further comprising distributing income to said members by means of electronic funds transfers; and

wherein said network comprises a rule-based generator programmed in accordance with said rule to generate instructions to instruct a transfer to a member.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising maintaining a side deal register to store side deal arrangements between members and adjusting the calculation of said rule-based generator to modify said rule in accordance with a side deal.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising conducting on-line meeting of said members on said network.

23. The method of claim 22 further comprising a providing access to selected entries in said network to selected populations.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein selected populations comprise consortium members, the public, negotiating entities and consortium partners.

25. A method according to claim 24 further adding or dropping a member in response to a vote of not less than  $N-1$  where  $N$  is the total number of current members.